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AHIMSA

[Non-Injury]



By

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[Original in Gujarati]



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SURAT

INTRODUCTION

I am, indeed, very happy to write a few words of introduction to this useful tract which is a correct and illuminative presentation of the philosophy of Ahimsa (non-injury) by learned panyasji Shri Kitirivijayji

Very comprehensive yet very simple philosophy of Ahimsa is so perfect and clear that once understood or felt it becomes our creed and faith. This has been proved in all the times, so much so, that the cult of Ahimsa has prevailed supreme and survived as the oldest and noblest faith. Not only our intellectual, spiritual and cultural progress but also material prosperity safely and soundly enhances where and when the rule of Ahimsa obtains, because it is Ahimsa alone that protects life

against all injury. Compassion, love, mercy and charity are inspired by Ahimsa while fear, hatred, anger, greed, violence, harm and injury are prompted by Himsa. It is the universal reign of Ahimsa that is needed for permanent protection, progress and peace of all the lives in the creation. No one will ever think to harm, injure or kill any life that is the cult of Ahimsa - the reign of God that commands kindness and forbids cruelty. In this way the sense of the philosophy of Ahimsa is masterly and admirably presented in this essay on Ahimsa by a revered Jain Muniraj (Moni) who has given his entire life and learning for preaching Ahimsa.

The author of this essay - Pandit Shri Kirtivijayaji is the disciple in chief of Dakshin Deshodbharka Pujyapada His Holiness 11th Acharya Shrimad Vijaya Lakshman Surishvaraji. Under the blessed guidance of such an eminent master (Acharvadeo)

the scholarly and devoted disciple has acquired profound knowledge and wisdom of the most benevolent philosophy and creed of Ahimsa, and propagation of the same has become his praiseworthy life-mission Himself a deep thinker, poet, author and effective preacher, Satavdhani Panaparsi Kirtivijayi carries his mission in a way that commands universal respect for his faith and his philosophy of Ahimsa

This essay would be a very good tract to propagate Ahimsa, It is desired therefore that its copies in thousands are widely distributed and read with interest

The original essay is in Gujarati and is published already This edition in English is a masterly translation by Prof Ghanshyam Joshi M A Sahityacharya who is a man of letters and master of languages like Sanskrit,

Prakrit and English The meaning and spirit of the original are scrupulously conveyed in the translation which is both correct and lucid With such introduction, I have great pleasure in commending this tract

Jamnadas J Udani

Ghatkopar Bombay 77

19th may, 1962

PREFACE

Today the horrible majority of the world's population enjoys filthy, dirty, unhygienic, criminal, heinous and most cruel practice of eating the dead bodies of dumb and most innocent creatures Since ages this practice has continued defying all appeals to human conscience and sense of propriety equity and justice Fire is ablaze and perpetual torrents of waters in the form of appeal for mercy have always been poured before the court of humanity but they have always been dismissed as the judges themselves are the offenders Still, ceaseless efforts to defend the innocent creatures' lives shall always continue till the supreme God of justice would strike to stop this grave offence viz Murdering cold-bloodedly the innocent creatures

in testing Race dogs in the west are strictly kept on vegetarian diet. Even nature has granted different biological data to vegetarian and non-vegetarian beings whereupon human beings are placed in the former category. Much can be said against this abominable practice of meat eating as what is evil is fundamentally evil.

Pujya Padasaji Shri Kirti Vijayaji, a leading preacher of Jain tenets who actually practices non violent life of compassion, has treated the subject of mercy in this booklet with fascinating appeal and I hope this treatise would go a long way to break open the Iron Gates of the hearts of some of the non-vegetarian brethren.

I am very much indebted to the author of this treatise for inviting me to translate into English this valuable work.

Ghanashyam Joshi

46 A Bhairat Nagar, BOMBAY 7
21st March 1962

A H I M S A

(NON-INJURY)

The ancient sages and saints have highly valued this human body. The gods and the demons also aspire to acquire human body. The soul, having wandered through eighty four lakhs kinds of species has earned this human body paying the price of immense merit.

It is plain and undebatable that human life is much nobler and higher than the animal-life and sages and saints have declared that the human life far surpasses and overweighs that of the gods and therefore there must be some distinguishing and elevated merit in human life which is so highly estimated by the great.

We cannot be great by merely declaring orally that we are great, we indeed are great. Are the

can be in the wilderness not so high and tall? Thus they are also great! Feeding the belly (hunger), fear sleep and cohabitation—(passion and desires are common both in a man and in a beast. Still how do we place man higher than a beast? Man needs every body and everything. Even the dung of an animal is needed by a man but the nightsoil passed by a man is not at all useful. Animal is physically useful to a man in every respect. Even after death the carcass of an animal has economic value but the corpse of a human being is not worth a penny — Man's body serves no purpose. The water of a river, a pond and a streamlet quenches thirst of human beings. The trees of the wilderness accord shelters to the passers by. The vegetable kingdom nourishes the human world with fruits, bulbs and flowers. A man has to depend upon air, water, sun,

ght, earth, fire etc, which are entities with one sense but the human body proves no utility whatsoever The entire world is nourished with the milk of cattles The nonliving matters also possess high degree of utility but what is the utility of human body?

Apart from gods - man is a non entity when compared with the glory, prosperity and achievements of gods But on consideration, man is found much lower than an animal But the sages have assessed human existence much higher or more elevated simply because of his actions, his humanity and his merits A man possessed of humanity is certainly greater than a god - of course much greater than animal

But at present when we reflect on the modes of life of a human being and that of an animal, we naturally begin to doubt how a man would establish himself as better than an animal

The reason for this doubt is the present man is committing such acts of injuries and violence which even the most ferocious animals like tigers and lions do not do. The present man assassinates in a moment millions of lives with the help of atomic missiles.

Misuse of Knowledge

The more a man knows and understands the more he is inclined to misuse his knowledge. He crushes to death dumb innocent creatures which cannot express their grievances. Do these creatures not possess life? Every being possesses life—either a man or an animal. All the beings are possessed of soul as we do. All the beings aspire for happiness as we do. Happiness is most covetable and misery is most repugnant to all living beings. As we do not prefer misery, so the rest of the

beings do not prefer it As we love
 to live, so do the rest of the beings
 As we react to any aggression, rest
 of the beings also do not love to be
 aggressed upon Even Indra in the
 heaven and a worm lurking in a
 night soil loves to live at any cost
 It is deeply pained when killed This
 means that even in the most filthy
 conditions worms love to live None
 likes to end life In any sort of
 pitiable condition all creatures cling
 to life-thread as the tortures of death
 are terrific Only a dying being can
 experience them The pains of death
 can be compared with those pains
 produced when millions of scorpions
 bite simultaneously Still more severe
 and acute are the pains of death
 That is why the learned Saints
 command us to protect all—not to
 kill, not to injure or oppress any
 living being, as none welcomes
 misery

Even a strong and a robust man gets nervous on hearing about death. Even the top rankers lose their heart. They worry 'Shall we pass away? Alas!' They lose all their courage and hardly care to eat or drink.

Death hovers above our head still like an intoxicated person. We all move care-free. We erect castles of ambitions in the air but we scarcely know the fate for the next day. Death shall abruptly pounce upon us and shall carry us afar. All the wealth and means of comforts shall stay on here and our collections of sins shall follow us. Therefore, Oh noblemen, Beware try to follow that every moment that passes is most valuable. Collect the provisions in the form of merits and fulfil the real purpose of this human existence. The god of death does not in advance intimate by telegram or post his arrival. He shall arrive suddenly without

giving notice in advance and shall carry you away even if you are in the womb or in childhood, in youth, in oldage, playing, eating or wandering Therefore, with all consciousness and alertness having realized the true nature of your soul, having devoted yourself to religious merits you should fulfil the mission of your life This is the duty of a sensible man

Now, let us come back to our current topic of discussion In a family of ten members, it is the duty of the head of the family to protect the rest of the members He, in order to protect them himself undergoes various sufferings In the same manner man is the most powerful, capable and the prominent creation under the sun. Therefore the man's primary duty is to protect the weak and the feeble

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creature " "Look upon them as thou lookest upon thyself " "There is no virtue like mercy " "Mercy is the foundation of religion "-are very popular These popular maxims also instruct us to lead non-violent life to lead the life of mercy and to protect other creatures

Poet Tulsidas's composition explains to us minutely how one has to observe mercy He says, "Maintain mercy till you breathe, protect all, observe mercy"

Gita, mythology and Smriti texts also preach to observe the principle of non-killing as the form of religion Each and every author of scriptures holds that infliction of injury is sin and non-injury breeds righteousness Do good to all Do not oppress any creature Kurin also describes God as profound with mercy and this implies that the followers of God should also

be full of mercy and then only they are the worthy devotees of God

Manusmṛiti describes seven kinds of slaughterers-Viz one who eats meat one who sells meat one who cooks meat etc Thus meat eaters are also declared as slaughterers

Vyāsa the author of eighteen mythology-texts says 'The essence of all the eighteen Puranas - The greatest of merits is the act of benevolence and oppressing others is the leading sin'

Lord Krishna said to Yudhishtira, 'Oh, Yudhishtira The killer of a creature is a 'Kumbhīpaka'

off our bravery with pleasure We eat their meat, but that very creature shall eat the meat of our own body for many lives to come

Lord Krishna indicating the fruits of non-violence said, "Oh Yudhisthira, The fruit of non-injury far surpasses the fruit realised through ablutions at holy places, all kinds of holy sacrifices, and entire Vedic study "

Further Lord Krishna said to Yudhisthira, "Oh, Yudhisthira, the merit earned by granting security of life to a creature far surpasses the merit earned by giving in charity the entire earth and golden mount Meru "

Great merit is declared by protecting the life of living being and very bitter fruits are laid down for killing life A wise man having realized this, should try for the welfare of all creatures belonging to this country or the other country of either a human

Those who protect the lives of living beings acquire all bliss in the next world. He attains to the elevated state. He who is kind to creatures is free from diseases always.

Today some of the Indians coated with Western civilization kill innocent creatures under the garb of humanitarianism. It is simply beastly behaviour to cut the throats of innocent creatures to nourish one self.

It is a dreadful crime, grave injustice and worst sin to deprive some one of life to fulfil one's own lust. Man is a rational and intelligent being and that is why he is valued more than an animal. Man's estimation as such is only worth when he protects all, oppresses none, saves all and gets anguished on seeing the pains of other creatures. Such a man would be very much anxious to eradicate the sufferings of other creatures.

His heart would overflow with mercy he would strive best for the welfare of others. He would protect the creatures by expending his physical-mental energy and even wealth. A man who acts with benevolence is only the most excellent and elevated being. That is why he is esteemed higher than a god. But a man deprived of benevolence, mercy, pity, and non-injurious tendency is not a man but a devil. He is not prudent and wise but stupid. He is a great fool. He is worse than an animal.

If one protects creatures like cows, buffaloes, goats etc., out of one's own interest then it is not an act of mercy. It is pure selfishness. Even a slaughterer maintains and protects his family-members out of his selfish-interest. This does not mean that he is kind. Indeed not. Thus mercy for one's own interest and self is no mercy at all.

Real act of kindness is executed disinterestedly and mercy should be out of benevolence and without any expectation of gain whatsoever. Such act of kindness covers all such acts of protection and welfare of creatures.

Jainism is a religion with very liberal and noble approach. Narrowness of vision does not find any scope here. This religion does not lay down to protect some creature and to neglect the others. It does lay down provisional principle of non-killing. It does not prescribe non-oppression for fulfilling one selfish motive. Such provisional enunciation is not genuine nature of "non-injury".

Of course we cannot protect all the creatures of the entire world. It is impossible. We have neither so much power nor wealth to protect all the creatures of the world, but we must sincerely aspire to protect all the

creatures We should not mean to protect some and to disregard the others

The great benevolent gods command, "Protect, each and every creature-the smallest and the largest-all love their life and repulse at the idea of death All love happiness and dislike misery Therefore kill none

Jain religion declares in the popular maxim, "Maintain friendly ties with all the living beings They are our friends" If we mean them as our dear friends then just as we do not oppress our friends we would not like to oppress them even We would certainly protect them, as oppressing a friend would mean a great betrayal Betrayer is a great sinner-most wicked person

? If we treat all the beings of the world as friends then the current

turmoil of violence which prevails
 today would be dissolved automatically
 The man has ceased to be a man
 He has become devilish For his
 selfish interest he massacres innocent
 creatures It is the primary duty of
 a human being to protect the
 helpless

What an unjust and offensive act
 we consider in normal course when
 one pulls down a blind man a deaf
 man or a lame man

A man or a King with all
 worldly prosperity is prepared to put
 to stake all his valuable assets to
 safeguard his life and this very fact
 proves that every one esteems one's
 life more than anything else
 Life is dear to one and all One
 cannot get back life at the cost of
 millions of coins Body without soul
 is not worth even a straw Then what
 is its value? The soul or the life

has value Then what a heinous act of cruelty to deprive other creatures of their most valuable life is The world abounds in many vegetables and fruits then why should we kill creatures? We cannot forget that the animal whose meat we consume, shall devour us in the next existence

We get nervous when we get headache or fever We cannot endure slight pain then why should we inflict tortures upon us at the hands of hellish beings by killing innocent creatures?

How would you endure these tortures there? None shall protect you there from these tortures None shall help you There is no peace even for a moment The hellish denizens (Parāmadharmis) mercilessly torture such sinners—chop pieces and still physical parts rejoin to

body like fluid of mercury then again the soul is baked in 'humbhi pakā' hell. He is thrown in fire & blaze and pierced through edged spear after tossing to height. When you are not reluctant to commit sinful acts than these sinful acts also would not be reluctant to react. How would the Soul bear the tortures abovementioned in hell? Here you cannot abandon meat and wine, but what plight you will be reduced to in hell?

We are influenced by Western culture and so we kill innocent creatures claiming the patronage of 'Ahimsa' or 'non-violence'. Mercy is the very foundation of religion or righteousness and we strike at this very foundation. The world aspires for peace, progress and prosperity while we are undermining those very aspiration by our own actions. Our own acts lead us to unrest and degradation.

There is a tale of saint Mandavya in Mythology. In his 21st existence he was a shepherd. He was stung by a louse once upon a time. The shepherd took the louse in his hand and punished it by piercing it through with a thorn. The louse died. The louse could have no sense of discrimination but the man has. The shepherd as a consequent reward of his sin of killing the louse was hanged on the scaffold for 21 times in 21 existences. Though he was not an offender, he was wrongly accused of theft and punished to death.

In the 21st existence he was born in a Brahmin family. Here he renounced the worldly ties and became a monk. He was named Munda and he practised penances in the forest. Once upon a time a thief stole some valuables from the forest. The policemen followed

thief in order to relieve himself of the trouble placed the box containing valuables at the feet of the monk and absconded in the forest. The monk saw the box before him. He opened his eyes. He found valuable jewels and diamonds. He was overjoyed. He thought, 'Indeed it is God's grace which placed reward for me here.' He took up the diamond necklace and put it round his neck.

In the meanwhile the policemen arrived and caught hold of the monk with stolen property. The monk was produced before His Majesty. The king said, 'Oh you Scoundrel, the thief in the garb of a monk!' He was sentenced to death. When he was brought to the gallows his previous karmas had been consumed. He had attained equanimity of mind. He acquired omniscience. His disciples were lamenting, when the

aint said, "Listen, Friends, To-day
 I have acquired knowledge of my
 previous existences In my 21st
 life I had pierced through a louse
 with a pointed thorn Due to the
 act of killing a louse I was punished
 to death despite my innocence I
 was accused of theft though inno-
 cent Violence or the act of killing
 breeds very evil consequences There-
 fore none should kill any creature
 Men kill lice, mosquitoes, bugs etc
 which sting them innocently The
 bug drinks only a drop of blood
 which is its own food but the man
 takes away its life It has no power
 of understanding while a man is
 rational being Man is sensible
 rational How mean it is on
 part to take life of an insect which
 only sucks a drop blood

Learning t
 Mandavya one
 for-al cre

warns us that we would be hanged on the scaffold for taking life of any living being

Some misinterpret the maxim "JEEVO JEEVASYA JEEVANAM" as "JEEVO JEEVASAYA BHAKSHANAM" i.e. Any being is the food of the other living being. The maxim correctly means 'life is the very life of every being' i.e. life is dearest to every being." We often speak that some one is our very life. This means that some one is very dear to us. If we misinterpret as 'life is the food of every being' then you cannot escape yourself when some one rushes to devo you. You cannot protect , ~

the poet for hunting Here the king
 shot down a boar with an arrow
 The innocent creature died King
 Bhoja, requested the poet to praise
 this heroic deed in poetry The poet
 Dhanpal audaciously declared in a
 verse, "May your heroism be
 hurled into hell, what a grave inju-
 rice with poor, meek innocent and
 helpless creature! Able men, alas,
 massacre the feeble creatures thus
 Fie to such sort of hunting Really
 the world has grown tyrannical"

He is the king worth his name
 who protects his subjects—all creatu-
 res high and low—big and small He
 has to impart justice and punish the
 unjust, but when the king himself
 acts despotically and kills innocent
 creatures whom should we com- to

It is conventio
 an adversary h
 mouth to indi

der then such an adversary is not to be attacked nor killed Now these creatures always live on grass and waters of the streamlets, and lead harmless life oppressing none How can we kill such guileless creatures This is indeed open tyranny

No poet ever could so boldly and flatly tell the king that it was pure injustice The king realised his fault and solemnly declared never to go for hunting having broken to pieces his arrows and bow

Such incidents should inspire us to observe mercy for all creatures We speak, Live and 'let live' But this is not enough You should still further endeavour to protect others even at the cost of your life Many heroes have sacrificed their lives to save the lives of others

Shantinath swami the sixteenth Tirthamkara of the Jains was the

King Megharatha in his previous life
 A hawk intending to devour pursued
 a penguin which escaped itself in the
 lap of the King Megharatha for shelter
 It was highly terrified and it
 asked for shelter as if through its sight

The hawk requested the King to
 leave the penguin for its food The
 hawk said 'I am hungry, This is my
 bird of prey' The King offered it the
 flesh of his thigh to satisfy its hunger
 The King actually cut the flesh from
 his thigh and weighed it in the scales
 but the penguin went on enhancing in
 weight At last the king offered
 himself to be devoured by the hawk
 What a mercy ! How pitiable !

Now the hawk in reality was a
 god who arrived there to test the
 mercifulness of King Megharatha He

The incident shows that the king himself was prompted to offer himself—his life—to protect the life of a bird. He intended to save the life of others even at the cost of his life. Thus we also should endeavour to sacrifice our life for the protection of others' lives.

Tale of an elephant

An elephant was itching on his foot when a hare jumped and sat under the lifted foot of the elephant. The elephant realised that the hare would be trampled under his foot if he placed it down and that is why he kept up his foot lifted up. Due to conflagration all over the forest many other animals and creatures sought their refuge under the foot of the elephant. When the conflagration subsided the animal left the spot. Thus to save the hare from being trampled to death the elephant kept

the leg lifted up for days together. This action caused inflammation of his nerves in the foot. He could not lower his foot. He could not even keep himself standing. Suddenly he fell down and expired. An elephant, the animal sacrificed his life out of mercy for other small weak creatures. The said elephant in the next life was born as the prince of king Shrenika as a result of his mercy extended for the hare. He was named Meghahumara who later on initiated himself into monkhood at the hands of Lord Mahavira and thus freed himself from the worldly bonds.

This incident reveals good deal of moral value. To protect a small and insignificant creature like hare the elephant sacrificed his life, but we all claim rationality, sense of discrimination and capability that

some ignorant persons crush to
 h serpents scorpions, lions tigers
 without any reason whatsoever
 y assert that these creatures
 se lot of nuisance, disturbance
 injury to human beings, but the
 t injurious and annoying creature
 an Man kills men and creatures,
 res men and creatures then why
 ld men not be killed as causing
 ry and nuisance ?

Serpents and Scorpions when
 ppled under foot only bite as a
 tionary measure and not other-
 e It is heard that a serpent would
 vl over our chest at night when
 are fast asleep and still it does
 harm us These creatures are
 rant but we are rational beings
 essed of intelligence and still we
 h them to death Thus the mea
 : souls are human beings The man
 ls very cruel and mean life inflic
 many miseries upon the creatures

Human beings are aspirants of happiness. Aspirant of happiness should always endeavour to make others happy. If you sow mango kernel, you shall enjoy mangoes, but you cannot expect sweet mangoes, when you sow thorns. You will certainly realise thorns and nothing else in that case. Remember, "As you sow, so you reap." Those who wish evils for others themselves fall a prey to these evils and when you cherish for others' good, you shall realise good only. It is as clear as crystal that one who works out evil for others, himself reaps evil rewards here and hereafter in the next life.

Teeth of carnivorous animals like tigers, lions etc, are sharp and pointed while the

Mythological texts hold that in bones resides Lord Shiva, in flesh lives Lord Vishnu and in Semen stays Lord Brahma So one should not consume meat

Even from purity point of view meat-eating is highly abominable Suppose some one spits in our mouth what a great annoyance would we entertain for the man If one sprinkles a few drops of blood on our clothes how much we are displeased with the man

Thus how mean displeasing and annoying is the act of eating various organs of the animal-body which are packed with dirty and filthy urine blood fat etc How can we afford to eat that which is highly disgusting even to the sight

A garment is impure when stained with blood then drinking vessel of animal blood, are we then so pure to worship Him '

Lord Krishna declared in Vṛṣṇa-dhara Purāṇa 'He is 18th kind of sinner who prays to me after consuming liquor and meat' Thus he is the most ignoble offender

Some argue, We eat meat but we do not kill creatures But this is mere hypocrisy Meat vendors and slaughterers only exist till meat devourers exist If people refrain from consuming meat the slaughterers and vendors would be nowhere One should not argue falsely being deluded with the temptations of the tongue

One should determine not to eat meat for spiritual development One should prefer starvation to eating such filthy and impure thing like meat One should condemn oneself while depriving any creature of its life to fill one's own belly

One should not protect creatures out of weakness but with boldness, moral courage and

do anything Inexhaustible energies flow from the soul Non-violence generates profound energy in a man A powerful soul not only protects itself but innumerable other souls also He becomes the very prop of the entire worldly order Weak soul degrades one's own self and derrogates others The world abounds in various and numerous fresh and pure edible commodities then why kill life ?

Oh good men ! Be strong and powerful Stick to righteousness Know your self-Develope the power of your spirit Elevate yourself Abandon meat-diet Solemnly declare to abstain from non-vegetarian diet liquor, evil conduct and violent acts Promise yourself to lead chaste harmless merciful, truthful and religious life Remain all the while engrossed in devotion to God Prove yourself as true follower of God and sincere guards of the world This is true religion, the path of bliss and self-elevation

This is the path to secure perennial bliss

King shrenika

King Shrenika is very popular as the king of Magadha country. He was a staunch devotee of Lord Mahavira. He rigorously practised religious rites. The king had a very intelligent minister named Abhaya-kumara.

The king had 500 chiefs who talked among themselves about the low cost of meat that prevailed in the market.

Now minister Abhyakumara planned to teach a lesson to these chiefs. Suddenly on one night he went to a chief's house and said, "His Majesty is seriously ill and the physicians advise to procure an ounce of human flesh to ensure his life. You are much respected in the Royal assembly." The chief replied, "It is impossible to get. Kindly do not tell to others that we are helpless."

The minister departed but none of the chiefs could tear open his bosom and chop the flesh therefrom

Next morning when the chiefs inquired about the health of the king in the Royal assembly they were astonished to learn the king was hale and hearty

The minister retorted 'Your Majesty, the meat was very cheap in the market but none of the chiefs could get me an ounce of human flesh !

The chiefs were much ashamed The minister said, Just as we cannot sell our own flesh at any price all creatures love their life as dearly as we love our life None loves pains Thus how can we cut the throats of creatures and eat their flesh Do they not feel pains ? Do they not love their life as we do ? All love to live so oppress none

The ministers realized the truth and dispersed

